

Electric vehicle charging stations in

Isperih

E-charging in rural locations



Summary

The electric vehicle technological centre “Belectra” has been created by a small company in the region of Isperih to develop innovative technologies for the electrical propulsion of cars, which are likely to reduce the carbon footprint. The charging infrastructure necessary for using such cars at regional scale has also been set up.

Results for the region include creating conditions for developing new technologies, services and products at the technological centre and training specialists to maintain electric vehicles and the charging stations. New public services have been developed, for instance optimising the costs of food delivery for sick and elderly people, municipal administration and companies in the social sector. Further benefits include environmental protection through the introduction of electrical propulsion systems with zero greenhouse gas emission; increasing energy efficiency and demonstrations to promote e-mobility.

Funding period: 2007 - 2013

EAFRD Measure: 312
Promoting economic development in rural areas; facilitating diversification

Other interventions:
Other EAFRD resources were contributed to the project by the LAG Isperih: 8000 € for a supplementary information project

In the period 2014-2020 potentially fundable under Measure: 7, 16, 19

(Potential) Contribution to Priority (2014-2020): 5, 6

(Potential) Contribution to Focus area (2014-2020): 5B, 5C, 6A, 6B

Funding

Total project value: 38,600 €
of which EAFRD: 27,200 €
EU EAFRD contribution: 80%
National EAFRD contribution: 20%
Private co-financing: 11,600 €

Type of beneficiary: Micro SME, NGO

Other actors involved in the project:
NGOs, LAG, Public administration

Duration: 2013 - 2015

Location: Isperih Region, Bulgaria

Website: <http://leaderisperih.eu>

Key words: Business competitiveness, Innovation, Young People, Sustainability, Climate action

Description

Official project title

Establishing a centre to upgrade, produce and maintain electric vehicles and charging stations (“Изграждане на технологичен център за преоборудване, поддръжка и производство на електрически превозни средства и зарядни станции”)

Context and needs

As a result of climate and market changes, more and more companies and individuals are interested in effective electric propulsion. Electric cars provide an innovative solution to the problem of rising transport costs and do not emit greenhouse gases themselves, as they do not use any fossil fuels. The car industry has been phasing in electric cars to the market – almost all big car manufacturers have developed their own electric models already. The challenges relate to making the production economically viable and to marketing. Importantly before completing and submitting his project idea, the promoter carried out market research. He had experience as the head of a team in a small company who upgraded two cars. The team also created the first Bulgarian electric vehicle charging station, as well as solar charging stations as until then no e-charging stations were available in the region.

Objectives

The activities at the technological centre strived to create new jobs in a non-traditional sector in this rural region, thus diversifying the local economy and job market. The over-arching objective was the positive environmental effect, as the project aimed at introducing an alternative transportation means, emitting no greenhouse gases. The technological centre building itself was designed to be energy efficient providing a direct economic effect and further linked the project to the green technologies. The project is also in line with the EC recommendation for Bulgaria to have at least 7000 electric vehicle charging stations by 2020. Before the submission of the project, only 20 were built in the whole of Bulgaria. Belectra centre planned to cover the technical support of 30% of the installed charging stations in Bulgaria.

Activities

From 22 October 2013 to September 2015 the beneficiary – Belectra company – has conducted a feasibility study, has prepared the project documentation, including construction and management plans, and has built the technological electric vehicle centre. The purpose of the Centre is to upgrade conventional cars into e-cars, to produce e-charging stations and to train mechanics. In addition, the company has taken it upon itself to organise information meetings with public institutions to discuss how they could optimise their car parks, leading to improved public services. These included the municipal welfare centre, municipal

administration and various companies in the social sector which could optimize their service costs by using electric vehicles.

The young team of Belectra founded “Electric vehicles for the regions – Isperih” which is an NGO to introduce the local population to the advantages, possibilities for everyday use and funding opportunities for electric cars. The NGO successfully submitted an application for a small information project to LAG Isperih and was supported with €8 000 of funding. The information project targeted the young local population. An after-school club for friends of the electric vehicles was established with the participation of 18 teenagers informally sharing their knowledge. The project is innovative for the region and for the Bulgarian LEADER program. It aims at developing environmental awareness and innovative spirit in search of environmental protection solutions and promoting local heritage.

The first functioning E-charging station created in Isperih

Results

Results for the region include creating conditions for developing new technologies, services and products at the technological centre and training specialists to maintain electric vehicles and the charging stations. New public services have been developed, for instance optimising the costs of food delivery for sick and elderly people, municipal administration and companies in the social sector. Further benefits include environmental protection through introduction of electrical propulsion systems with zero greenhouse gas emissions; increasing energy efficiency; demonstrations to promote e-mobility. About 500 members of the community took part in six demonstration days and 60 of them participated in an exercise for assembling mini models of electric cars. 1000 inhabitants of Isperih municipality indirectly benefited from the project due to their raised awareness about electric mobility as a modern solution for health and environmental protection and a way of creating a contemporary and attractive image of the region.



The results for Belectra company were increased sales revenue due to work conditions created; improving the quality of services and decreasing the time of services; expanding market positions due to new competitive advantages; creating three new jobs (two mechanics and one administrator). As the electric mobility market may increase at any moment, it is possible that more new jobs will be created. Upon the establishment of the technological centre the company expects to gradually occupy at least 60% of the upgraded electric vehicle market and 70% of the charging stations market in the region.

Five charging stations have been built between March and September 2015 in the cities of Varna, Plovdiv, Shumen, Burgas and Belogradchik.

Lessons

- The most important lesson learned is that the success of such an innovative project in a rural area depends on a tight-knit, dedicated team. The project promoter has good practical experience in the sector and is familiar with the development of e-car technologies. He represents Bulgaria in the eMobility Coordination Group under the European Commission.
- The cooperation with LAG Isperih has also been vital for the project's success. Although the first charging station in Bulgaria was launched in Isperih in 2011, surprisingly the local population was not aware of the opportunities provided by electromobility and the contribution of their town to the sector. Funding a small information project by the LAG contributed to the promotion of electric mobility in the region.

Quotes from project participants and contributors

"This project is very successfully implemented by young people and has good chances for the future to be sustainable and expand the activities by creating a training centre. It is also a very good example for diversification of rural economy."

(Emilia Germanova, LAG manager)

Contact

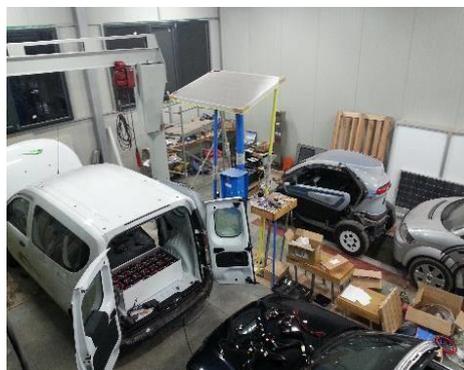
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The electric vehicle technological centre and its interior



Languages for contact: Bulgarian, English, French

Additional sources of information, links

- <http://www.ecars.bg/en/>
- <http://leaderisperih.eu/> (in Bulgarian)

References

Photos: <http://leaderisperih.eu>